

## Army Strong, Army Safe

**Great things are happening in our Army today. We're not just "Army Strong," we're also "Army Safe." In my opinion, our Army is doing more today than any other time in recent memory. But I also believe our continued successes are the direct result of actions from the entire Team, contributing in ways we might not have in the past. We must ask ourselves, "How can we execute everything we have before us today, including successively more difficult missions, and do it all safely?" That rhetorical question is a GREAT topic for discussion!**

The number of technical safety experts within our formations is limited. It's probably accurate to say that, except for aviation units, there's just one full-time professional safety officer at brigade level in most units today. Fortunately, the Army recently received approval to hire the extremely valuable civilian safety professionals now embedded at brigade level. These folks deploy, execute mission sets, redeploy and make the same sacrifices as our Soldiers while making significant contributions to combat readiness.

However, there simply aren't enough of these safety professionals to go around. They can't be with us all the time to remind us what's important. We must augment their efforts, and this is where the power of YOU comes into play. We must take ownership of our actions and those of our teammates. The first team's power thought, "I can save my own life," is indeed powerful but could be more so if we add "and my teammates." There's indeed power and a combat multiplier in protecting our teammates. Remember, if you don't, you'll operate with less than you came.

All of us are leaders with a responsibility to look out for our comrades. We should acknowledge a fallen comrade isn't just someone who's in a hot landing zone or taking fire in a Baghdad alleyway. A fallen comrade might reveal themselves to us as one too tired to drive to drill or home on leave, or one riding their new motorcycle without a helmet or proper training, or one depressed to the point of suicide or suffering the effects of sexual assault.

As an Army of leaders engaged at all echelons, we're required to look at each other and ask, "Are you ok?" Let's commit to lead at the levels we're trained, get the mission accomplished and then lead some more. Your job as a Soldier and a leader never ends. Take care of yourself and take care of each other. If you don't, who will?



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Commanding